

**FINANCE/TAX REDUCTION/MANDATE RELIEF - COMMITTEE**

Wednesday, February 15, 2023 - 10:30 AM

Thomas Scozzafava, Chairperson  
Noel Merrihew, Vice-Chairperson

Chairperson Scozzafava called this Finance Meeting to order at 11:00 am with the following Supervisors in attendance: Clayton Barber, Stephanie DeZalia, Charlie Harrington, Roy Holzer, Ken Hughes, Steve McNally, Noel Merrihew, James Monty, Tom Scozzafava, Matt Stanley, Ike Tyler, Joe Pete Wilson, Margaret Wood and Mark Wright. Shaun Gilliland was excused. Robin DeLoria and Derek Doty were excused. Davina Winemiller was absent.

Department Heads present: Laura Carson, Michael Diskin, Jim Dougan, Judy Garrison, Chelsea Merrihew, David Wainwright and Michael Mascarenas.

Also present: Joe Keegan and William Tansey.

SCOZZAFAVA: Good morning. We're running a little late so I'm going to call the Finance Committee to order. First on the agenda is our County Clerk, Chelsea.

C. MERRIHEW: Good morning. In January we collected \$356,000, transferred \$196,000 to the Treasurer for local retention.

Of notes, the Governor's budget included an increase to the DMV county revenue share for county run DMV's. So under the current model we keep 12.7% for in office transactions and 3.2% for online transactions after a \$300,000 threshold is met. Under the proposed model we'll keep a 10.75% flat rate across the board so for in person and online without a threshold we will start retaining 10.75%. I crunched the numbers for 2022 numbers and it came up that we would have had an increase of \$50,000 in our revenue so about 20% if we get approved, that would start January 2024. I may be one of the few people who had good news to the Governor's budget. I know the county clerks have been working for several decades to get that changed.

MASCARENAS: It is good news.

C. MERRIHEW: That is all I had.

SCOZZAFAVA: Okay any questions? If not, thank you.

C. MERRIHEW: Thank you.

SCOZZAFAVA: Laura, Auditor's office.

CARSON: Page one is our department head expense report to date, I received four vouchers for Coroner Heald and the funeral home responded to three removals.

Page two is our supervisor expense report. Just mileage mostly. Page three is our invoice summary. We processed almost 1300 invoices and noted 207 errors in January to date, we prevented about \$2500 in over payments and \$8900 in duplicate payments. Page four is our budget. Page five is the assigned counsel monthly summary, yearly comparison. I'm intentionally not processing twenty-three vouchers I've received yet, I'm still cleaning up 2022. We received over 150 vouchers. We only paid out 26, totaled about \$16,000, that is because there are still

about 170 sitting over at Chambers. I expect them back this week or next so this should be in the, for this month's numbers. Page six is the Assigned Counsel 2022 budget. It's not final yet. We are still posting for 2022. Page seven is the 2023 budget for Assigned Counsel and that's why you'll only see admin costs there. As I said, I haven't started processing 2023 vouchers and Page eight is our tax roll corrections. We received three from RPTS in January. Does anybody have any questions?

SCOZZAFAVA: Nope. Thank you, good report.

CARSON: Thank you.

SCOZZAFAVA: Dave Wainwright.

WAINWRIGHT: Good morning. I'll be quick this morning too. You should have all found your RPTS annual report in your box and I'll just need a resolution for that and other than that I've got nothing.

**RESOLUTION ACCEPTING AND PLACING ON FILE THE 2023 RPTS ANNUAL REPORT.  
Hughes, Wilson**

SCOZZAFAVA: Discussion? Being none, all in favor, opposed – carried. Any questions for Dave?

McNALLY: I appreciate you sending those postcards out but you forgot a big part of the postcard. What you didn't put was some rules to this, it was like click bait out there on the internet. We had 80 phone calls. All you had to do to adjust that problem was put on there, primary residence and 65 and older so if you have assessors that are angry you know what it's about.

WAINWRIGHT: Oh, I know. Believe me I've been hearing it.

McNALLY: I'm sure you have.

WAINWRIGHT: What I did was use the law as it's written, the exact wording because this was a second notice, not a brand new thing. It's a second notice and the first notice is on the back of their tax bill the second notice is supposed to mimic that wording just as a reminder to seniors. The fact that people are coming out of the woodwork, people in their 40's thinking that they would be eligible, people from Canada, thinking that they are eligible in hindsight, yes, I could of put a lot more wording in there but I did follow the wording that the law says, shall be on the notice.

McNALLY: Something to think about next time possibly you could add some more wording on this?

WAINWRIGHT: Sure, sure we can.

McNALLY: Next time you do that, if you could put that on there.

SCOZZAFAVA: We received numerous calls. I received calls but on the flip side of this, okay I also had a lot of people who were more than eligible that didn't even realize it existed so it did help a lot of people at least in my community.

McNALLY: I agree with it completely getting it out there for the public it's that it just would have been if we would have had some more information on there to keep the calls down.

HOLZER: Well, in Wilmington we love hearing from our constituents so send out anything you want, we are always willing to listen to people from my community. Quickly, how many revals are scheduled for our county this year?

WAINWRIGHT: Revals that are part of the cyclical plan that they are required to do, there are only three but everybody's sales ratio is so low this year because the sales are still coming in ridiculously high pretty much every town has to do something again just like they have the past couple of years.

HOLZER: So let me ask you this, if we as a body, as a county of 18 towns said no, New York State we're are going to have a cooling off period, we're going to keep everything status quo, would something like that ever work because this is ridiculous. I mean, our guys in our community can't keep up with all the revals in Wilmington, it's been year after year after year and I'm sure North Elba is the same way probably Willsboro, all of us are.

WAINWRIGHT: I think there's a problem because a lot of the –

GILLILLAND: To add, what can the State do to us if we don't do it?

SCOZZAFAVA: Your equalization drops.

WAINWRIGHT: Your equalization will go down

SCOZZAFAVA: There goes your STAR, it impacts a lot of things.

WAINWRIGHT: Then the follow year, people's STAR exemptions will be a lesser amount, Veteran's exemptions will be less. The other issue is when your equal. rate goes down the tax rate will go up to make up the difference you can't get away from it so even though somebody's assessment can go up their equalization rate is going to drive up that tax rate and they are still going to be paying it.

SCOZZAFAVA: That's going to happen this year with us. We will be 94% hopefully, and we'll be up 6% on our rate.

MONTY: That was going to be my question because we had, I believe the last report we got we had two communities that weren't at 100% so did that affect it last year?

SCOZZAFAVA: It will be this taxable year. It wasn't last year, it will be this year.

MONTY: So you're going to lose STAR exemptions, Veteran's exemptions if your tax rate goes up 6%?

WAINWRIGHT: Well, you don't really lose the exemptions it's a lesser amount.

SCOZZAFAVA: Lesser amount, yeah you keep it but your tax will be based on 100% so you're going to go up 6% on your assessment is the bottom line.

MONTY: Ten percent is what they asked for.

SCOZZAFAVA: But I've been around and around New York State over this as you know Dave, for years and even the method that they use to come up with these rates I've never agreed with and it's killing us and the problem is you can't keep up with it all so it gets very discouraging but to answer your question, I certainly think we could do a resolution and send it to our State representatives to the Governor and so on as to, a well written resolution on the position this is putting these eighteen towns in in Essex County.

MONTY: Agreed.

SCOZZAFAVA: So if we can write something up I don't think that would hurt.

WAINWRIGHT: It can't hurt.

SCOZZAFAVA: To give attention to the fact of what we are going through during all of this.

McNALLY: Isn't there a rate where you don't have to do a reval, 95% is that it?

WAINWRIGHT: Yeah, if you are within 5% of 100% this State will give you that. So, if you're between 95% and 110%.

McNALLY: I think we are going to meet that this year because we do a reval every three years. I think this year we meet that 95%.

GILLILLAND: Doesn't it depend on your sales?

SCOZZAFAVA: Yes.

WAINWRIGHT: That's exactly it so, the issue is certain areas of the county have a 10% sales trend so the sales this past year, are 10% higher than they were the year before and because of that everything needs to be adjusted.

BARBER: Doesn't it take the State at least a year to catch up if they are going to do a reduction of the tax?

WAINWRIGHT: It does. Yes.

BARBER: Okay so my question is, if the Town of Chesterfield did not do the revals people wouldn't see the reduction right off that year?

WAINWRIGHT: You're right they would not, the only thing they would see is their tax rates would go up school and what not because their equalization rates would have to go down. You'll see two values on the assessment role there will be their assessed value and then you'll see market value below if market value is the higher one, market value is basically what they will be paying taxes on whether their assessment is lower than that or not that's where equalization rate comes into play and effects your taxes.

MONTY: This has nothing to do with your equalization rates or your post cards, do you want to talk a little bit Dave about you and I talked about this morning, about unity fiber and how it could

affect some towns with the special franchises?

WAINWRIGHT: Yeah, we get a list, the State of New York values special franchise properties which are utilities, fiber optic, overhead wires, underground wires, poles, guide wires all the things the assessors can't put a value on. This year we got a lot of new ones pretty much all the towns that border the Northway you've got a special assessment for a place called, Unity Fiber LLC they are new to our county and we're trying to figure out, Jim and I were looking at that trying to figure out if they've taken over for another company. It is extra money that the towns are going to be receiving this year if it's brand new. If they took over for that intel-fiber or if they just absorb them or bought them out you probably won't see any difference.

MONTY: As long as the other companies were paying that along the way, correct?

WAINWRIGHT: That's right.

MONTY: If they haven't been paying it along the way, someone is going to have to foot the bill.

WAINWRIGHT: Right and I'll check into that when I get back upstairs.

MONTY: It means a lot to the Town of Lewis because I've got seventeen miles of interstate.

SCOZZAFAVA: I have 100 feet. You'll see Town of Moriah and if you blink you'll see Town of North Hudson. Anyone have anything else?

MONTY: Thanks Dave.

SCOZZAFAVA: Thanks Dave. Mike Diskin.

DISKIN: I think if you drive down the Northway there's a pole there that says, Entering Moriah, leaving Moriah on the same pole. *(laughter)*

SCOZZAFAVA: I used to tell the State Police, I'd say, why don't you write those tickets in Moriah?

DISKIN: Two cars won't fit in that space.

Sales tax we sent out to you and we just got another on Friday we got a second check so I wanted to bring you up to date on that. With the first check we had gained another \$322,500, second check we had a smaller gain, it was not quite \$85,000 but for the year we've actually gained at this point we are \$942,597.32 ahead of last year at this point. Not to get excited because we all know those things go down later on when they chew everything up there's going to be some negatives coming in but just so you know where we are right now with it. It always happens in June and then again in December they actually calculate everything that they have estimated because these revenues that we get are just estimates based on prior sales and then they balance it out twice a year so if their estimates are too high we're going to see a reduction at some point, probably in June if they over estimated it.

Occupancy – we finished up the year at \$6,804,438.95, that's for the year. You can see that it runs February through January but that's because February is when we get the January money so it's actually January through December money rentals that were out there so that's the actual rentals for the year which is about a little over \$10,000 more than last year. It's interesting because the first year we did this in the year 2000, we had slightly over a million now we are at \$6.8 million.

We started something this year that we spoke about that's getting new information out on new registrations and during the month of January we had 16 new registrants. I notified the towns individually rather than send them out to everybody but twelve of them came from North Elba, two from St. Armand, one from Wilmington, one from Newcomb. We continue to get registrations. We got a bunch this month. The gamut is running primarily through North Elba but we are getting a few others that are coming in and as we get them at the end of the month we send that information out to Supervisors so that you'll know who is registered in your towns and we still continue to get information from some of the towns questioning who have done their own surveys of town people that they believe should be notified and we're doing that, sending letters out letting them know that primarily there are people that probably don't realize the deed they are registered because they are collecting through Air B&B or something and we require them to register anyways so we know we are on that radar to send money in if they do collect.

I sent you revenues and also the cash flow. Now we're going to get into the fun stuff. I know the County Clerk said we may get some additional revenue this year, well guess what? We may lose revenue from our auctions. Some of you, I told you about this but in the Governor's message this year she included a requirement that she wants passed, new legislation of Section 989 of Real Property Tax Law, that requires county's or any municipality that has a tax foreclosure auction to give the excess back to the owner. It doesn't say anything about what we do with the negatives only if we have an excess we have to return it to the former owner with the caveat that if there are liens, they make us file a lien they get priority first to get that money and then we have to file a priority lien of who filed the liens first so if there is excess money, we go to the first lien holder, pay them off, if there's money left over we go to the second lien holder. The problem is how do you figure that out? They do this in bank foreclosures so basically what we are going to be doing is same thing what happens with bank foreclosures only banks have been doing this and they don't get a negative on theirs but this past auction we had a little over \$110,000 in negative losses from properties that sold for less than what was owed in taxes. There's no provision in this new proposed law to make that up by keeping that so it's going to be in that lost. The prior auction a couple years ago, when we did one back in 2019, we lost almost \$318,000, so if we have a bad auction and last June was a good auction because we hadn't had one in a couple years, real estate, people were interested in buying up properties, real estate. If things turn the other way and go backwards we're going to see more losses than we do gains and we're going to be having to make that up in our budget. In our budget we calculate that we are going to get everything that we're owed for taxes. We don't ever plan on getting an excess that's not really quite what the object is but it's in the budget and it's in our fund balance to consider it as paid even though we don't actually have the money in hand because at some point the assumption is we're going to get 100% of what the taxes were billed out. We lose \$110,000, we are not going to get that so that's going to have to be calculated into the budget. A lot of problems with this. First of all, we don't have that we will have to make it up by passing that loss along to the taxpayers of the county and I'm not pointing any negatives to any particular town but if we lose a lot of money in one town and another town that did not have any losses their taxpayers still have to make up for the losses in that other town.

SCOZZAFAVA: The thing to do with the auction is that once they bid the amount due for taxes, sold!

DISKIN: You're probably right, the first one to get to that point. Maybe if you do that the opening bid will be for the taxes and that will be it.

MONTY: Well, I've got three questions for you Mike. I'll start with the first –

DISKIN: I'm glad it's only three because I have about 103.

MONTY: Well, I've got more but I've got three that I want to ask you right here. As far as Essex County makes towns and school districts whole so do we get to make ourselves whole for paying those taxes all those years?

DISKIN: No.

MONTY: So that's one negative.

SCOZZAFAVA: Let's not forget fire districts –

MONTY: No, no all of those. The cost of us going to a tax auction, the time spent, the title searches, the legal work will we get to be able to take that out?

DISKIN: We get to deduct what they call administrative costs. They have not defined what administrative costs are so we're not sure what that means. As a Treasurer's Association we've been talking about this, we're not sure what administrative costs are, what they feel administrative costs are.

MONTY: So this last question and you might want to pull a curtain around you because I think it's going to take the Wizard of Oz to answer this, what's the Governor's reasoning? I know you probably can't answer that or you may have an opinion you can share with me later.

DISKIN: Well, let me preference this by saying this is not new around the country. There's a group called the Pacific Legal Foundation and I've talked about them in the past year a couple of times who have been going around the country and working and suing different states for the same reason. They were in Arizona about three years ago, they sued the State of Arizona and they won their case that people were not getting reasonable return on equity for their property like they do on a bank foreclosure. The State of Michigan went through this in 2021, and they lost their case. There was a couple of cases, what brought the case was there was a couple of properties in Wayne County which is Detroit where somebody owed over \$8000 in property taxes and the property tax sold for like \$29,000. There was another one that owed twelve or fifteen thousand I'm just guessing the number and they sold for considerably more and those people complained because they didn't get the equity. It's a specific legal foundation kind of like legal aid society owned nationally took this case on and went to court and the Supreme Court in Michigan ruled in their favor, said from now on the State of Michigan, when you have any auctions in your counties you have to give back anything excess over that. The State of Michigan, I talked to a number of Treasurers there that I have contact with who are dealing with this now and the problem is the courts now are looking retroactive and god forbid, not going back with going back retroactive with these losses and have to make up for them for how many years back. Let's hope that doesn't happen but in Michigan they have a process where once you gain excess on your land you have to notify in a sale, you have to notify that former owner that that's available to them and they can apply for it, that excess. There's an application process, there's a deadline they have to get that. Anybody that applies for the excess has to go to the court that signed the foreclosure and in this case it would be county court here in Essex County but whatever court signed their order and the Judge rules on whether you get the money back or not so a lot of extra burden, the Judge is not going to be happy.

SCOZZAFAVA: I did a little bit of research once I found this out and some of this is coming from

a lobbying effort of the lien holders, they are saying, you know what we didn't get anything.

DISKIN: There's a lot of problems with this. First of all it's going to take an enormous amount of time probably from the County Attorney Office, along with our office, County Clerk's office to find out who these lien holders are, how much was owed because we know if you file a lien from a bank it goes down as people pay it off so we don't know how much is owed to the lien holder. The other problem and the County Clerk will probably tell you this is a lot of people don't file their, when the lien is paid off they don't file. Saying the lien has been satisfied so they didn't get satisfaction lien so we may be chasing this around and find out when we get it all done the lien has been satisfied. If there are no liens against the property which happens in a lot of cases, the taxpayer gets the money back the problem is what if we can't find the taxpayers? And a lot of these cases these properties have been abandoned, these people have disappeared or certified notices will go out and come back unclaimed, we don't know where they are, we post the property required by law, we put the notice on the front door, we put a stake in the ground whichever so that we're covered by the real property tax law but what do we do with the money if we can't find them? What do we do in the case when there's ten owners in a family? Three of them are deceased is there any estate that we send those people money to? There's a lot of work on this. What do you do in a case of a foreclosure where the husband and wife is divorced since then? We have to look up the divorce settlement decide who got what in the divorce, who got the house, was it 50-50? How do you do it? Do you divide this money up? We had a property right here in the town of Elizabethtown that we sold, we don't know where the owner is, we tried and we couldn't find them and nobody has told us what we are going to do with that money but I'm assuming it's going to get abandoned to the State like other abandoned funds. The problem with abandon funds, after ten years the state keeps that money if nobody claims that within ten years so there's probably a little bit of a windfall to maybe the towns the State might get from this if they file those abandon funds but there's a lot of legal work that has to go before you file that abandon funds, there's a lot of stuff that has to be thought about here. A lot of extra work on the part of county officials, my office the Treasurer's office, the County Clerk's office, the County Attorney's office to chase these people down.

HOLZER: So, one more fly in the ointment how, in your research, how are they going to approach when a county takes possession of a foreclosed property and a lot of times each of us different towns and even the housing land bank pulls property out of the auction where does that leave us in able to acquire those properties?

DISKIN: We can acquire them and you can sell them, it was going to be one of my suggestions maybe we just put all the properties in the land bank and don't give this money back. We are going to lose the negative anyways why give these people a benefit? We are going to act as a realtor to these people basically and I can see a lot of lien holders not going out and going after these properties doing the foreclosure themselves, the bank is going to say just let the county get it and they'll give me what's left over just like it would happen if I foreclosed on it. If the bank forecloses on it sometimes they don't get anything out of it because nobody bids on that at the mortgage foreclosure auction so they get stuck with the property and then they've got to go deal with how to get rid of it so it's a lot of easier for the county to get rid of it, sell it and give them twenty or thirty thousand and the lien holder. There's a lot of little things and the biggest thing is a legal question that nobody has the answer for us yet, we and I say we as the County Treasurers Association are putting together a package of questions that we are going to go to Albany and talk about. In a tax foreclosure the in realm foreclosure that's done by the county, we notify all the owners, we notify all the lien holders, we tell them here's a date certain after which we are going to foreclose if you want to protect your lien you have to come in and pay those taxes off to



remove it from the foreclosure, if they don't do that their lien is extinguished under the Real Property Tax Law, it's gone so if the lien is gone, how do you pay? How do you reinstate that lien once it's gone? Nobody has told us how we can legally give money to somebody that the lien is gone for, not only that, but if you read article, I believe it's article 8 of the New York State Constitution that says you can't make a gift of public money to somebody. This is public money because the county now owns this property so it's public money when we made this profit, how do we then give this to a private individual or a business with it not being considered a gift of public money? So there's a lot of questions on how this is going to happen and nobody seems to have an answer yet. It's pretty basic information within this section of law, it's not very well flushed out. A lot of issues are going to happen once this goes through.

TYLER: This is the first time the State has ever done anything like this, they usually don't do this. *(laughter)*

DISKIN: I know they usually a 100% of it, you're right like they usually tell us more.

MONTY: None of those other States Mike appealed?

DISKIN: Oh, absolutely.

MONTY: And did they lose it or has it not been heard?

DISKIN: Interestingly the State of Minnesota there's a case now Hennepin County that's gone all the way to the US Supreme Court to be dealt with because in Minnesota they started doing this, the State sued, it's now in the US Supreme Court. If the Supreme Court in the United States rules against them, that's going to open the flood gates for everybody because now you've got settled law and it's been settled by the Supreme Court telling you to give this equity back. So there's a lot of looming parts in here, a lot of people are watching what is happening in Hennepin County Minnesota myself included to see what's going to happen with this.

SCOZZAFAVA: So for this to be enacted it is going to have to be passed in both houses right?

DISKIN: Absolutely. There's a lot of counties that have already done resolutions and that's what I'm here today to ask the board to support this. St. Lawrence County incorporation their resolution opposing it along with a resolution opposing the, keeping the eFmap money they put it together in one and asked them to do that. In Ontario County they separated them and did two separate resolutions but basically it was to send a resolution opposing this it's called Part M of the Governor's message saying that we don't want this to happen.

MONTY: Is this going to happen in three years? I'm leaving in three years.

DISKIN: No it's going to happen, if the budget gets passed and it doesn't get out, it's going to happen now. It's effective with any foreclosure filing done after October 1 of 2023, so anything we've done up to now in other words, the properties that we foreclosed on in 2022, we are not going to have to share that equity if we get it anything after that October 1<sup>st</sup>, we foreclose on that's when it's going to begin so the future ones are going to have it.

GILLILLAND: Steve Acquario was actually at the AATV meeting with us last week and he's preparing this week for two budget committees on both houses, he took this particular issue to heart because one of the things we talked about is his counter to the expansion of housing

availability because we said the whole idea of the land bank would be gone.

DISKIN: I heard a message from the Governor, interestingly was that and I don't have the wording exactly I will sort of summarize it, this is going to make more housing available to people because housing is not going to be taken out of the market. I'm not sure how they reconcile that? That people are going to be able to stay in their houses and they are not going to lose their houses. The housing market will be better. I'm not really sure how that correlates but it doesn't make sense but that's what it says.

SCOZZAFAVA: Ike, do you want to move that resolution? Is there a second, unanimous committee second?

HUGHES: Can you remind me what the resolution is?

SCOZZAFAVA: In opposition to this proposal.

DISKIN: Passing of actual new real property tax law part M of the Governor's message but it's new. I'll give Mr. Manning the exact wording of it.

**RESOLUTION IN OPPOSITION OF THE GOVERNOR'S PROPOSAL TO REQUIRE EXCESS TAX FORECLOSURE PROCEEDS TO BE RETURNED TO PRIOR OWNERS. Tyler, unanimous**

SCOZZAFAVA: All in favor, opposed – carries. Anything else Mike?

DISKIN: Not for me. That's enough. I'm going to have a lot of work to do in the next six weeks or so before this all gets past.

SCOZZAFAVA: Good report. Mr. Mascarenas.

MASCARENAS: Okay so here we go again. At one of the board meetings last month, Mr. Scozzafava asked me to look into Charge Point and that's for our electric charging stations that are happening over there. You all have basically a recommendation on your desks of how I'd like to proceed with that. So, we looked at a bunch of information that some of you have these in your towns, Saranac Lake, Lake Placid, Wilmington what it looks like is most of you are around that 19 cents per kilowatt charge per hour of charging so that's what I am recommending. Two hours would be free of parking, after two hours a \$2.00 parking fee would kick in per hour. Charge Point does that. You're allowed to set the flat fee. You can see the picture that I posted on the bottom of that so that additional would be that. We have about \$1200 we spend a year on maintenance of those machines currently we are collecting nothing from that from the user and just so everybody is aware, we weren't allowed to. The original grant that we go required us to allow free operations of that for a period of time. We are allowed to now that time has since been gone and we can do that. So, we should actually be charging for that. We do have \$1200 in maintenance cost a year. If it was used every hour of every day for an eight hour day, we would bring in somewhere around \$6200 a year, it's not a lot of money but it certainly pays for the maintenance cost and hopefully for the charge people start recognizing and being a little more courteous of how long they are parked at those locations during the day. I'm asking that the board approve this plan and we can implement it prior to April 1<sup>st</sup> that's a little ways out but what I would like to be able to do is meet with the department heads, share the policy with all the department heads at the next meeting, get those notices out to the courthouse so anybody who is in and around this

area and get signage developed through DPW that would be placed at the Charge Point talking about the new policy and process and how we are going to do that moving forward.

**RESOLUTION APPROVING A POLICY FOR THE CHARGE POINT ELECTRIC CHARGING STATIONS. Tyler, Merrihew**

SCOZZAFAVA: Discussion?

STANLEY: I'm not on this committee but if somebody were to charge only for the two hours and somebody would come charge for two hours and somebody else would charge for two hours there would actually be no income generated, correct?

MASCARENAS: No, if you see that there it would cost about –

STANLEY: Well, didn't you say the first two hours are free?

MASCARENAS: The first two hours are free for parking. We charge the 19 cents per kilowatt hour that is being used to charge that machine which produces about 50 miles, after that an additional fee is going to kick in. If you're longer that the two hours you're going to pay an additional \$2.00 per hour to be parked basically in that parking spot.

STANLEY: So if somebody were to rotate every two hours, we would possible get a \$1.60 a day?

MASCARENAS: Well, I don't know. The math that I have here is, the math that I did assumed that people move their cars every two hours. I'm assuming that they are going to do that and that would generate about \$6,000 a year.

SCOZZAFAVA: That's primarily what brought this to a head is that other people couldn't get in there to use it, there would be one vehicle there constantly.

STANLEY: So if I want to park in that spot, it would cost me \$12.00 for the day to park there.

MASCARENAS: If you parked there all day long you're first two hours would be the 19 cents per kilowatt hour, next if you work an eight-hour day, it's six hours so it would cost you about \$14 or \$15 because you're going to pay an additional two dollars and something for those kilowatt hours to charge your car on the first two hours.

SCOZZAFAVA: Correct.

MASCARENAS: And we do only have two locations in the whole county so right now we don't have a lot of machines.

SCOZZAFAVA: Is there three?

MASCARENAS: Two. One machine, two hook ups.

SCOZZAFAVA: So you can hook four cars there?

MASCARENAS: No, two sir.

SCOZZAFAVA: There's two coming out of each?

MASCARENAS: No, there's one machine with two hook ups.

DOUGAN: Two at Public Safety.

MASCARENAS: Yes, Public Safety we have another hook up but here we have one right out back one machine with – it's basically like a gas pump.

TYLER: So Mike did you look at what your kilowatt hour would actually be charged to NYSEG?

MASCARENAS: I did look. I didn't look at the actual charge per kilo watt hour but I looked at actual charge and it's really minimal. I want to say we spent on the charging like maybe \$120 all year last year in terms of that unit and what's it's costing the county to hand out for free.

TYLER: We did that in Westport, we figured in 19 cents a kilowatt is what we are being charged from NYSEG and National Grid so we're charging 39 cents a kilowatt and a fee if you park there all night or something and we had a couple of people in town who we using it all the time when it was free and now all of sudden, nobody is using it. We wanted to get enough money so it would cover the maintenance and all that stuff on it and we are getting some fast charges in town and going to do the same thing with those.

MASCARENAS: Agreed and I think this will cover our maintenance cost. Like I said, our maintenance costs is \$1200 a year. It's projected that we will probably bring in about \$6,000 on it and I'm not looking to make a killing on it but let's cover our costs and prove the availability for others that want to use it.

MONTY: So are we going to have a charging police because what is to stop somebody from coming down, unplugging it, waiting five minutes –

SCOZZAFAVA: No, if they want to sit there all day they are going to pay whatever it is to be there all day. Forty cents like, I'm surprised you haven't been turned into the public service commission.

MASCARENAS: What are you charging? Are you charging about nineteen?

SCOZZAFAVA: We charge enough to cover our costs and we primarily put them in for when Charlie is in town so he has a place to plug in. Okay, who's next?

HUGHES: I just want to be clear this would effect, so county employees would most likely park in this spot is that correct? My question is if there are going to be people other than county employees parking there I would want to recommend some type of code to put in as a discount to county employees?

MASCARENAS: I can look at that and see if that's an option. I can you that almost no one that's a county employee parks there and uses it.

TYLER: You can do that. Through the one we have you can arrange a code in there whether they are county or not.

STANLEY: I guess I'm confused. If you don't stay the two hours you don't pay the \$2.00 so if

people are changing before every two hours they are only paying the 19 cents?

MASCARENAS: Correct.

STANLEY: So that would be essentially 40 cents an hour times six hours which would be \$2.40 times 260 days would be less than \$600 dollars.

GILLILLAND: It's per kilowatt hour.

MASCARENAS: Right, you are going to use more than one kilowatt hour in an hour.

STANLEY: That's it, thank you.

MASCARENAS: The math right? If the board could simply give me the authority to add charges. I will look into the discount so that we can get this new policy process started by April 1 that would be great and that's what we need a resolution.

HARRINGTON: My thought is this service should be provided by a private enterprise and that we shouldn't have any involvement with it whatsoever. That's why we've got these commercial stores, they can set up a station and they can do the charging and whatever and we could elevate ourselves from any headaches.

SCOZZAFAVA: I agree but they are already there.

HARRINGTON: So, take them out.

MONTY: Weren't they purchased with county grant money?

SCOZZAFAVA: Yes, it's like the ones we have in Moriah, they were paid for through NYSERTA. Crown Point? Who put them in, War Cannon put them in themselves?

HARRINGTON: We have a private enterprise who took advantage of this. We were going to do some installations but when private enterprise said they were going to do it my thought was, back off.

SCOZZAFAVA: Absolutely, same thing you did on the transfer station. Alright so all in favor, opposed – carried.

BARBER: I just want to say that all your Stewarts are going to be putting in charging stations. My understanding was the manager who works in Chesterfield, she said all the new Stewarts are putting in new charging stations.

SCOZZAFAVA: Okay, North Country – Joe.

KEEGAN: Good morning everybody nice to see you all. Thank you for your ongoing support of the college and our students were really grateful for that. I wanted to share with you, I'll start with our advocacy work. I shared this with you in December that Community College President's group, there's 30 of us across the SUNY system working with the trustees in all thirty community colleges have been going out to the State, we started with the Governor's office and now with the Assembly and Senate asking for continued increase in investments in community colleges and

there were three asks that were identified in that little black box. We asked for the floor to keep our maintenance of effort funding state funding coming in, they stay at the levels that were 100% of this year, 2022-2023. The positive sign for that is the Governor put that in her budget and so we were really pleased to see that, for North Country that's a \$300,000 and change impact for us if it stays in the budget so that's really helpful. We also asked a 4% increase in our operational aid. Even if we get the floor we would be flat where we were in 1920 and I think you all know with contractual obligations, with inflationary pressures and with our board of trustees holding tuition flat for the last three years and we're going to be four in '23-'24 we need revenue and so we've asked for that to increase that from the State. That did not make it into the Governor's budget priorities but we are advocating at the Assembly and the Senate and then the third, there was a \$60 million dollar enrollment and other initiatives. We asked for that to be included. The Governor put in a \$75 million dollar transformational funding initiatives which community colleges participate in, that's in her budget so on a whole, two of the three things we were requesting made it in through the first line. We will see where things will shake out over the next month and a half. I wanted you to be aware of what we were advocating for and the impact that it will have on us. I've reached out to our State elected officials Billy Jones, Dan Stec and Matt Simpson who have been very supportive of the community college over the years and I know I heard from Billy that he will continue to advance our advocacy asks so I'll keep you in the loop. Like I heard the county saying, we've got six weeks of advocacy left before things get settled and hopefully it will really benefit our students. Just to give you a perspective, with all the taxable aid that comes in the North Country, this includes county and state support we get 50% of what the State operating campuses get to prepare some of the most financially needy and academically needy students and so, this doesn't seem beyond available for us so I wanted to share that with you.

I wanted to bring you up to speed, I think the county is aware is aware of our EMT efforts. We had basic EMT last semester in the fall of the first 19 students that graduated excuse me that's it for their tests 18 of the 19 became EMT's, they passed their test which was great that means 18 more EMTs out in the communities. We are currently running a two, AEMT courses right now one in Saranac Lake, one in Malone we have 28 students enrolled in them. We have a basic EMT starting this spring, late spring early summer in Ticonderoga and we're going to be at Lewis early for preparatory early first responder course. I think it's for Emergency Medical responder so that's real positive.

Continuing with trying to align our programing options for students that line with the county's workforce needs. We got approval for a teaching assistant position. We've heard and I'm sure you've all heard about schools just desperate for those pathways for teaching assistant up through teacher education so that allows for students to start with us an aid able certificate in teaching assistantship onto a two year degree that prepares them for early childhood ED and then they can go onto a four year school for that so that was great. I think the announcement was out three days, we picked up three students so it was real positive.

Mike you will be pleased about this, our AS Human Services our Child and Family Services are now online. It means we can reach more members of the county to be able to hopefully fill some of those county jobs in Social Services. We've also got a chemical dependency counseling we are hoping to get online and we were able to in the spring we offered admission for 26 of our practical nursing and associate degree nursing students for a spring only semester. These were students who didn't make it through their full year, they had an opportunity to come back. It was great. It was good for them. It's good for the county. It's good for the college. It's good for employers so those were all positive and I think you may have read the reports in the paper, we had a pretty good spring with our enrollment so our enrollment is up relative to our budget and that was real positive and we're hoping that it is a sign that we are coming out of the downward pressures of the pandemic.

The only other thing I wanted to share with you has to do with what I heard you speaking about I

think in Stephanie's meeting about the capital projects. We've got the nursing labs project is underway, it's in the last phases of the design phase right now. We are expecting that to go out to bid in March and we also have our science labs renovation project also going out to bid in March. It will be the first significant investment in our colleges in several years. It's about a \$3.3 million project and I think you referenced about having some, I think Steve had said, you know if we had something nice to attract people, we will be having some new science labs and nursing labs to do that so thank you to the county for your support in those applications and we'll keep you in the loop as we learn more. Maybe there will be a ribbon cutting or something and that's it. Thank you.

SCOZZAFAVA: Thank you. Any questions for Joe?

HARRINGTON: Yes, I heard that there were sessions for trainings for water and waste water persons. Is that in the realm right now?

KEEGAN: So we ran a course in the fall. We ran the first course of waste water basic waste water and we are planning to do another round next fall so in fall of '23 and we are preparing a, laying the ground work for what we are hoping is a round table discussion with interested parties so that we can learn what the needs are regionally and also when is the best time to run the course. So last year, the way we ran it was we ran it on the weekends because we wanted to offer people that were in our region not having to leave their jobs for two or three weeks some, we heard from at least one supervisors who said that didn't work for them so we're trying to – we want to make sure when we run it again that it meets as many needs as possible so yes on both counts.

SCOZZAFAVA: How many did you have enrolled?

KEEGAN: Four in that initial culvert.

WOOD: Can you tell me, if someone enrolls in your course does the State testing happen in that course or do the people still have to wait until six months later?

KEEGAN: You know, I don't know that. I'll find out when that is.

WOOD: That would be helpful.

HARRINGTON: Yes, we've had discussions in the past about CVES doing preliminary courses for EMT trainings is that being offered? For those persons who are interested in EMT and then you would be, North Country would be the stepping stone for the finalization of the trainings.

KEEGAN: One more time, I'm sorry Charlie I was writing down about the waste water question.

HARRINGTON: It's the same question but involving EMT's.

KEEGAN: The testing does follow up right after, it's my understanding the students sit for the test in EMT right after they take it with us. I'm not sure about wastewater.

MASCARENAS: What he was asking you Joe is has Champlain Valley Educational Services, do they offer an initial EMT so that maybe you do the advanced training at the back end, so the kids come in prepared?

KEEGAN: I'm not aware of that Charlie but I will look into it.

HARRINGTON: It appears to me that that will be a stepping stone.

SCOZZAFAVA: It is. Good idea.

GILLILLAND: I just want to place another brain bug in your head, you heard our discussion about Fish Hatchery?

KEEGAN: I did.

GILLILLAND: That seems to me is an area that and we've had some challenges on getting technicians and things like that to work there, I'm sure the DEC and their hatcheries and other county hatcheries around have also and what we want to take a look at is some offerings or courses or certifications in management, hatchery management in fisheries would be something we may benefit from.

KEEGAN: I will bring it back to our science department.

SCOZZAFAVA: Okay anything else for Joe? If not, very good report. Thank you.

KEEGAN: Thank you Tom. Thanks everybody, nice to see you all.

SCOZZAFAVA: Anything further to come before the Finance committee?

HUGHES: Good morning Mr. Chairman. I would like to bring forth to this committee a resolution in support of the Essex County land bank application to the Empire State Development.

**RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE ESSEX COUNTY LAND BANK APPLICATION TO THE EMPIRE STATE DEVELOPMENT. Hughes, Wilson**

SCOZZAFAVA: Discussion?

MONTY: I just want to brief everybody. I sent out draft application and we haven't heard anything back this way we are beginning the process, it will go through ways and means which gives us another time frame to look at it. If anybody has any questions please contact myself or Ken and hopefully get it approved at the March meeting so we can submit before the Governor gets her legislation in. Thank you.

SCOZZAFAVA: Thank you. Any further discussion? Being none, all in favor, opposed – carried. Anything further to come before the committee? If not, we stand adjourned.

As there was no further discussion to come before this Finance committee it was adjourned at 11:56 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judith Garrison, Clerk



Board of Supervisors